



Funding Opportunity Announcement

FY22 Solar Canopy Grant Program

Program Description: This program provides funding to support the installation of parking lot and parking garage solar photovoltaic canopy systems, which include at least four (4) Level 2 or Level 3 electric vehicle chargers under the solar canopy.

Note: This program was previously known as the Parking Lot Solar Photovoltaic Canopy with EV Chargers Grant Program.

Type of Grant Program: Competitive – statewide

Application Deadline: **Round 1:** Wednesday, November 24, 2021, at Noon

Round 2: Tuesday, March 8, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. EST

Eligible Applicants: Businesses, non-profits, state agencies and local governments to include public universities, community colleges, and public schools. Individual residents may not apply for this program.

Eligible Activities: Grantees will either directly install or install through the use of Power Purchase Agreements, solar canopies over parking lots or parking garages.

Anticipated Program Budget: **Round 1:** \$1,000,000 - The funding is from the Strategic Energy Investment Fund ("SEIF").

Round 2: \$750,000 - The funding is from the SEIF.

Evaluation Criteria: MEA will evaluate each complete application based on the value of the project to the state's energy goals., which is determined, in part, by using the Application Review Checklist. A sample of the Application Review Checklist can be found on the program website.

The primary element of the evaluation is the overall cost per watt of nameplate capacity: The total project cost per watt installed in the solar PV canopy system. (\$5,000/total cost per kW).

Additional evaluation criteria includes:

- Additional roof or ground mounted capacity installed in conjunction with a canopy system and located on the same real estate parcel. Please note,

however, that MEA will not include roof or ground mounted capacity when determining the grant amount ((total capacity in kW-dc minus 500kW-dc)/1000).

- The number and type of qualified EV chargers to be installed (1 point for a level 3 charger),
- Innovative project design and/or use (1 point),
- Estimated accessibility and frequency of use of the proposed carport and the EV chargers (1 point if available to the public),
- The frequency of parking lot use (1 point if used 7 days per week), and
- The geographic diversity of grants awarded (0.5 points if the only entry from the county).

Due to the complexity of the selection process, MEA may request additional information after all applications have been submitted to facilitate the evaluation process.

MEA reserves the right to consider geographic diversity of awards and distribution across the state as part of its evaluation.

Review Process: The MEA Program Manager will assemble a Review Team of at least 3 qualified program managers, energy specialists or other professionals. Individuals from outside MEA may be included at the Program Manager's discretion. All team members will review each application using the Application Review Checklist. Projects are ranked from highest to lowest. Despite the ranking, the review team members may still recommend against an award. Any recommendation against an award will be discussed by all team members during an in-person (or virtual) meeting. A majority vote of the team members will be required to disqualify an application for cause. Any disqualification for cause will be documented in the award recommendation memo to the Director (MEA). The review team will recommend applications for funding based on the amount of funding available. The review team may, at its sole discretion, recommend one or more additional projects (in order) for funding, if funding becomes available before the end of the fiscal year. The Program Manager will make recommendations to the Director, incorporating input from the Review Team. In the event of a disagreement, the dissenting concerns will be included in the recommendation memo to the director.

Award Formula: MEA will provide up to \$500 per kW-dc of canopy mounted solar PV per project, with a maximum cap of \$250,000 per project.

Partial awards: Partial awards are possible under the Program. Full grant awards are made among approved projects from highest to lowest rank. If insufficient funds are available to fully fund a project, the applicant will be given the opportunity to fulfill the grant obligations with the remaining budgeted funding. If the applicant agrees, then the project will be funded with the remaining funds. If the applicant

does not agree, then the offer is made to the next approved project in rank order until all funding has been expended or all remaining projects have rejected the offer. While MEA anticipates using the full amount of allocated funds for this program, MEA reserves the right to obligate some, all, or none of the FY22 Solar Canopy Grant Program budget, based on the quality and eligibility of applications submitted.

Required Application Documents: The following documents are required as part of the application package. In the event of a purchased system the site owner will also be the system owner.

1. A Completed application Workbook (Excel),
2. Copy of the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) Certificate of Good Standing for the site owner, the solar system installer, and the system owner.
3. For businesses or non-profit, provide a signed contract or letter of intent between the Site Owner and System Owner. The letter of intent must include at least the location and estimated capacity of the solar system.
4. For State Agencies and Local Government, provide evidence of state agency or local government commitment in the form of a signed contract with a system owner, OR a letter of commitment from a senior level agency or local government official who is authorized to act on behalf of the state agency or local government. If a signed contract is not included, provide an overview of the state agency or local government's procurement process, which includes steps, approvals that must be obtained, and an approximate timeline for each step of the process. The Letter of Intent must include at least the location and estimated capacity of the solar system. If a Power Purchase Agreement is being considered, a State or Local Government entity that must still go through a procurement process must state that their electricity price expectations should be available on the open market (and provide their basis for this expectation).
5. For business or non-profit, a copy of an itemized and signed contract or letter of intent between the System Owner and Installing Contractor. The Letter of Intent must include at least the location and estimated capacity of the solar system. If a state or local government applicant already has a signed contract or letter of intent, it should be submitted also.
6. A system diagram detailing locations, dimensions, and orientations of the system on the property. The system diagram must include dimensions of the parking lot and the Solar Canopy.
7. A site map exhibiting the location of the system on the property (image from Google Earth/Maps © (preferred), digital/print photograph is acceptable).
8. Evidence of the Site Owner's control of the project site, preferably in the form of a recorded deed, or a lease extending at least 25 years past the expected completion of the solar canopy.
9. Evidence of project finance in the form of a financier's Letter of Commitment or a signed letter confirming the prospective system owner's ability to finance the project on its own.

10. Construction schedule (assuming the Grant is signed on February 22, 2022).
11. IRS Form W-9 for the applicant (organization receiving the grant funding).
12. Solar Production estimate (PVWatts or PVsyst).
13. A basic electrical schematic of the facility's electrical system (a one-line diagram is acceptable) and where/how the solar array connects to it. If part of a resiliency plan, provide a separate diagram showing potential future components of the resiliency system.
14. For a purchased system, calculate and provide the simple payback period (show your work). For a 3rd party owned system, show the cost savings to the site owner over a 25- year period (show your work).

Submission Instructions: MEA encourages the use of electronic applications to streamline processing and reduce environmental impacts. If you cannot apply electronically, please contact MEA no later than seven (7) days prior to the application deadline to identify an alternative method to submit the application.

The application spreadsheet and required documents should be submitted electronically to MEA via email to: **solar.mea@maryland.gov**.

If specifically authorized by MEA, an applicant should mail the supporting documents to:

Maryland Energy Administration
Attn: Public Facility Solar Grant Program
1800 Washington Blvd. Suite 755
Baltimore, MD 21230

Grant Program General Provisions: MEA grant programs are covered by general requirements that will be made part of the grant agreement, titled General Provisions, between MEA and a grantee. A copy of the General Provisions document is available on MEA's website at

[\[https://energy.maryland.gov/SiteAssets/Pages/all-incentives/Grant%20Agreement%20General%20Provisions.v.2.pdf\]](https://energy.maryland.gov/SiteAssets/Pages/all-incentives/Grant%20Agreement%20General%20Provisions.v.2.pdf); these provisions will be incorporated into each FY22 grant agreement issued by MEA.

Program-Specific Requirements:

Definitions:

- Solar canopy: A structure over a parking lot or a parking garage allowing vehicles to park directly under the solar panels. It does not consist of putting solar panels over the existing structural roof of a parking garage.¹

Restrictions and Limitations:

¹ Under rare circumstances, when vehicles may not be allowed to get wet, MEA may allow a light, non-structural structure to be installed between the vehicles and the solar canopy to protect against rain.

- When a city, county or state government entity is the site owner, the site owner shall receive all funds and shall be responsible for all determinations of Section §§14-416 17-303 of the State Finance and Procurement Article (as applicable).
- At least one person certified as a Solar PV Installer by the [North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners \('NABCEP'\)](#) must be involved in the design and/or installation of the community solar array. Applicants will be required to provide the name and certification number of this individual(s).
- The Grantee receiving funding is responsible for submitting all reporting documents, including invoices, to MEA.
- Only one MEA grant may be awarded per project.²
- Projects will be given up to 2 years to be completed. When necessary, extensions may be requested from MEA at least two months prior to the expiration of the existing grant.
- The project consists of at least 75 kW of solar PV panels mounted on a canopy structure over a parking lot.
- The project consists of at least four (4) new qualified Level II or Level III EV charging stations located in the same parking lot or on the same parking structure as the solar canopy. (The requirement for the location of the chargers may be waived by MEA.)
- The applicant must be able to exhibit control of the proposed project site, either as proof that the parking lot is owned or leased (with at least 25 years remaining after the expected completion of the project construction) by the applicant.
- The applicant must be able to exhibit a signed contract with an installing contractor/developer). This contract may be contingent on receipt of this grant. However, for state or local government agencies that must use a Request for Proposal, provide a letter of commitment, signed by a senior official from the state or local agency documenting the agency's commitment to the project (in place of the signed contract).
- A Maryland Historical Trust review must be completed without an adverse finding before grant funding may be paid.
- The solar system must meet minimum system requirements as specified in IEEE 1547 and the National Electric Code.
- Each component of the systems must be listed or labeled by a recognized national testing laboratory.

Grant Funding and Payment:

- Upon receipt of grant agreement signed by both the grantee and MEA, MEA will encumber (set aside) funds.
- No costs incurred by a Grantee prior to execution of a Grant Agreement will be reimbursed by MEA for a Project.
- Grants will be paid after the project is online and producing creditable power. The Grantee will inform MEA when the project is completed (all zoning requirements met, all permit inspections

² MEA encourages grantees to consider energy efficiency in concert with a PV project. A grantee may also apply for, and receive an MEA Commercial, Industrial and Agricultural (CI&A) grant for energy efficiency or a Lawton Loan. Developers may use multiple energy efficiency or renewable energy grants from other State or Federal agencies to fund this project.

passed and permits closed, all commissioning tests satisfactorily completed, and permission to operate received from the utility). MEA, at its sole discretion, will then conduct a site visit. Upon completion of the site visit, the Grantee will submit a Final Invoice and Completion Report. Upon receipt of a complete and accurate invoice and completion report, MEA will process the remaining grant funds for payment to Grantee.

- MEA reserves the right to request documentation of hours worked, receipts for materials ordered, etc. to justify funding amounts.
- For any project that is inspected by MEA, all major deficiencies (as specified by MEA) must be corrected before MEA will make grant funds available. Minor deficiencies should be addressed/corrected, but distribution of grant funds will not be delayed.

Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs): Projects must register for and receive Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs) in Maryland. Grantees will be required to verify the successful registration of projects with the Maryland Public Service Commission and with PJM Interconnection. For information concerning SREC registration, consult the PJM EIS website at <https://www.pjm-eis.com/>

Program Changes: MEA reserves the right to modify or change the Solar Canopy Grant Program at any time as needed for legal, financial, or programmatic reasons. Changes will be available on the MEA Solar Canopy Grant Program webpage. Changes made after the application deadline will be communicated directly to applicants or grantees, as applicable, by letter and/or e-mail. Also, MEA reserves the right to determine the final grant amount for each Grantee after review of all proposals received and consistent with funding availability for the Program at that time.

Questions can be directed to:

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410-537-4064 (w) or 443-908-1743 (c)

Last Modified: January 17, 2022
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